

Posting / Retiring Colors Protocol



Honor Guard - Update: 18 August 2025

Commander John J Shea Assembly #729





Purpose Of This Handout

This guide is meant to supplement, not replace the Drill Manual. All Guards should be familiar with protocols as stated in the Drill Manual.

Note: What is outlined here is how the Cmdr John J Shea Assembly will typically handle Posting and Retiring Colors. In some instances, modifications may be made due to specific circumstances of the service.



Posting of Colors

Posting Colors

TIP: Look Sharp - When marching, ALWAYS LEAD WITH YOUR LEFT FOOT. Try to keep in step with guard in front of you.



1

STAGE

1. Honor Guard Lines Up

- Guard
- US Flag Bearer
- K of C Flag Bearer
- Guard

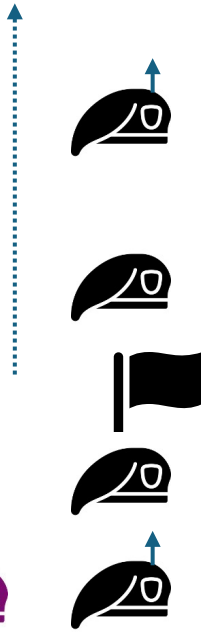
NOTE:

Flag Bearers DO NOT WEAR SWORDS

Guards will enter room with Swords at CARRY Position AS AND WHEN INSTRUCTED BY THE COMMANDER

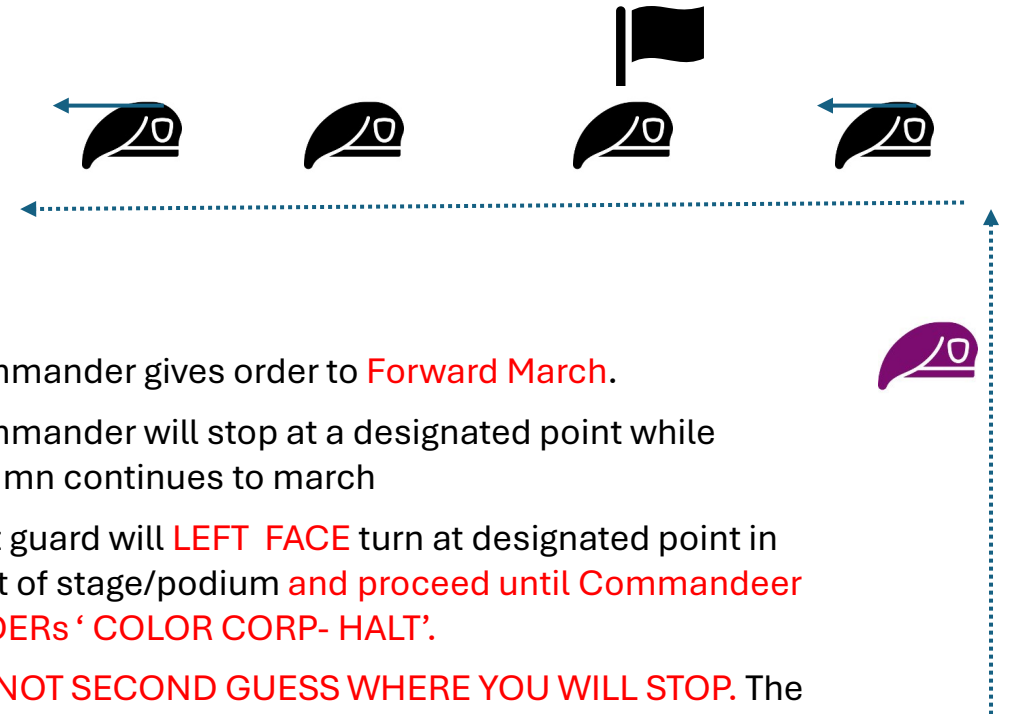


Note: Arrow designates direction guard is facing



2

STAGE



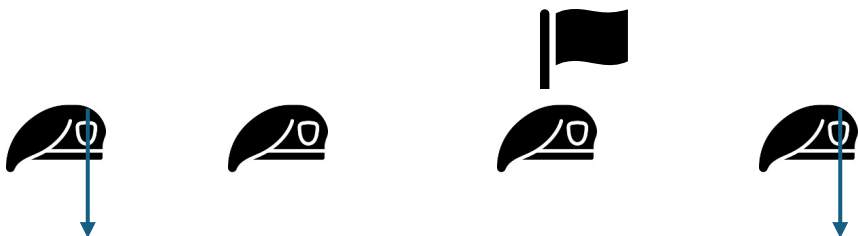
2. Commander gives order to **Forward March**.
3. Commander will stop at a designated point while column continues to march
4. First guard will **LEFT FACE** turn at designated point in front of stage/podium and proceed until **Commandeer ORDERS 'COLOR CORP- HALT'**.
5. **DO NOT SECOND GUESS WHERE YOU WILL STOP.** The Commander is observing the line up and will tell the first guard when to stop. The guard will keep marching forward until given the command to halt.



Posting Colors

3

STAGE



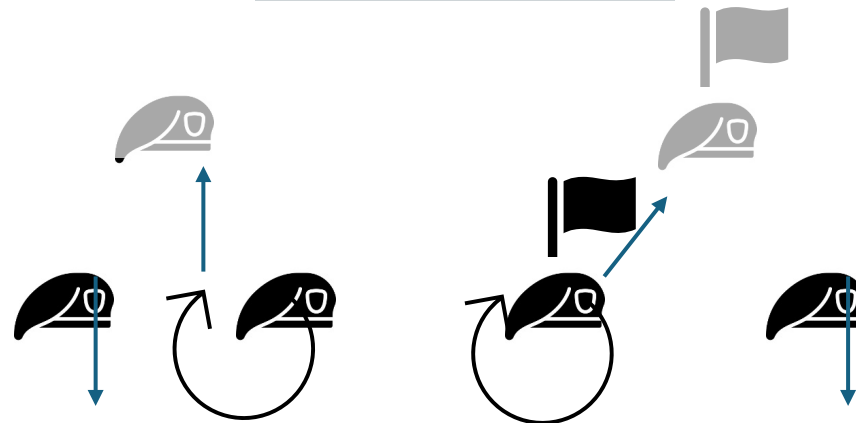
6. Commander gives order to '**LEFT FACE**' – Guards are now facing rear of chamber (with stage /podium behind them).
7. Commander gives command to **PRESENT COLORS**. US Flag does not move. K of C Flag to be dipped lower than US FLAG. **GUARDS with Swords will go into PRESENT SWORD Mode (Sword salute) DO THAT AUTOMATICALLY ON Command to PRESENT COLORS.** Stay At Attention During National Anthem and or Pledge of Allegiance.



Note: Arrow designates direction guard is facing

4

STAGE

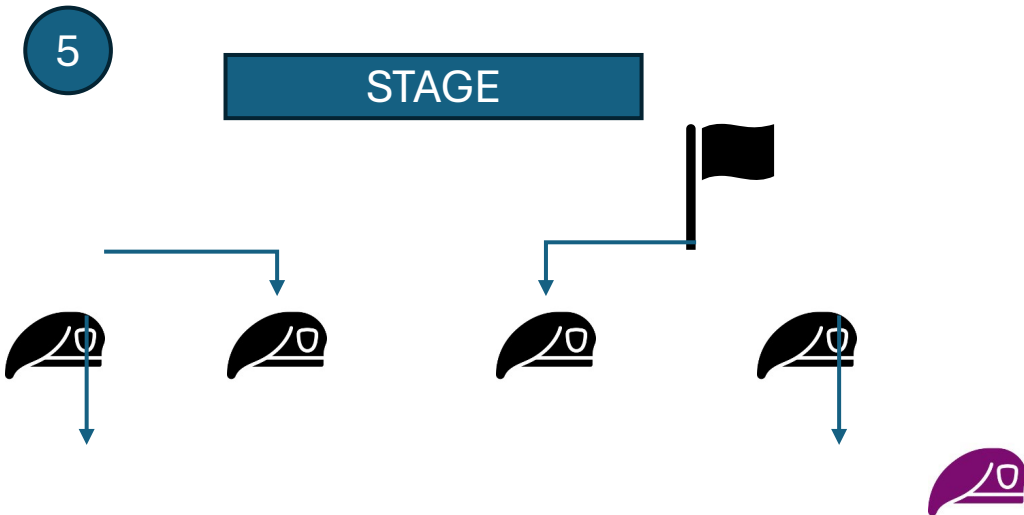


8. After National Anthem and/or Pledge of Allegiance, Commander gives order to '**CARRY COLORS**' – Flags go back upright and **Guards With Swords Automatically GO Into CARRY SWORD POSITION**
9. Commander gives command to **POST COLORS**. (**FLAG BEARERS DO THE NEXT TWO STEPS – 10 & 11 WITHOUT ANY FURTHER COMMANDS !**)
10. **BOTH** Flag Bearers do an about face **TO THEIR RIGHT**. They then Post the colors – **WATCHING EACH OTHER SO THEY POST AT THE SAME TIME.**

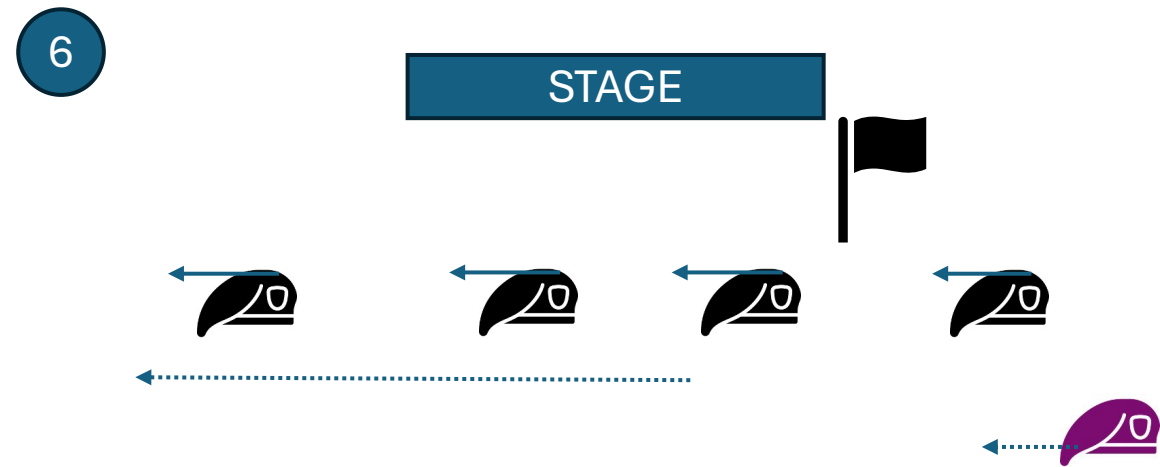
Posting Colors



TIP: Look Sharp - When marching, ALWAYS LEAD WITH YOUR LEFT FOOT. Try to keep in step with guard in front of you.



11. After the flags are posted, they **SALUTE THE FLAG IN UNISON**. They then **PIVOT INWARD AND RETURN TO THE COLUMN** facing in the same direction as the Guards (toward rear of chamber) – **REMEMBER THIS SHOULD BE DONE AUTOMATICALLY AND WITHOUT ORDERS FROM THE COMMANDER!**



12. Commander will give order to **RIGHT FACE**
13. COMMANDER will give order to **FORWARD MARCH**. GUARDS will proceed to pre-designated area and wait at attention.
14. Commander will order **RETURN SWORDS**, then **HAND SALUTE**, then **DIS-MISSED**



Note: Arrow designates direction guard is facing



Retiring Colors

Retiring Colors

TIP: Look Sharp - When marching, ALWAYS LEAD WITH YOUR LEFT FOOT. Try to keep in step with guard in front of you.



1

STAGE

1. Honor Guard Lines Up

- Guard
- US Flag Bearer
- K of C Flag Bearer
- Guard

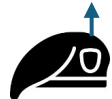
NOTE:

Flag Bearers DO NOT WEAR SWORDS

Guards will enter room with Swords at CARRY Position AS AND WHEN INSTRUCTED BY THE COMMANDER



Note: Arrow designates direction guard is facing



2

STAGE



2. Commander gives order to Forward March.

3. Commander will stop at a designated point while column continues to march

4. First guard will LEFT FACE turn at designated point in front of stage/podium and proceed until Commander gives order 'COLOR CORPS - HALT'.

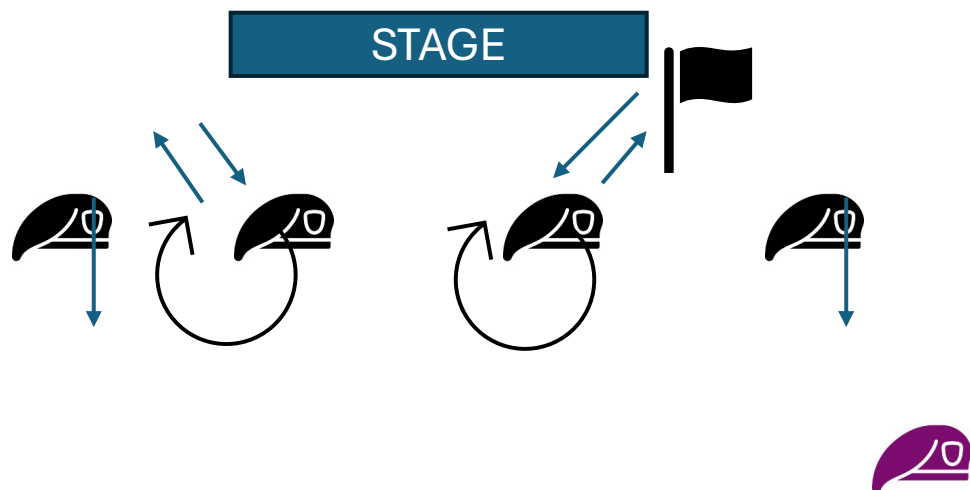


Note: If additional Color Corps to be used in ceremony, the Commander will give instructions on how to execute based on specific circumstances



Retiring Colors

3

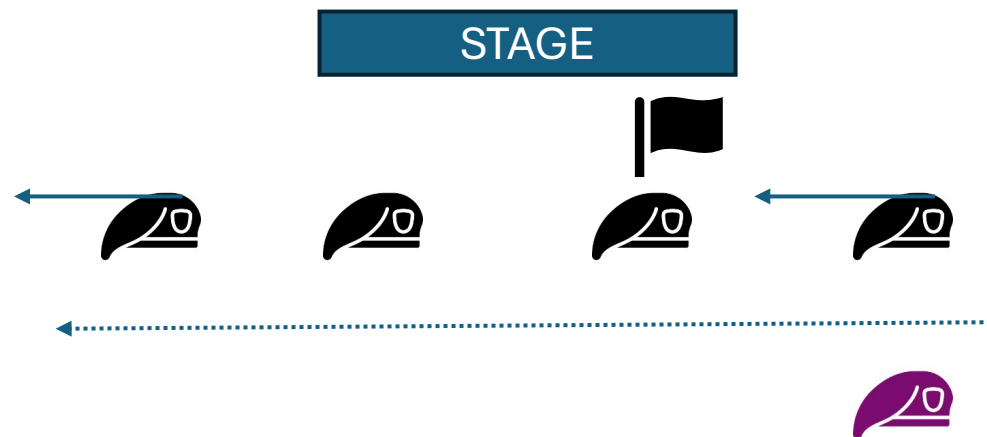


5. Commander gives order to '**LEFT FACE**' – Guards are now facing rear of chamber (with stage /podium behind them).
6. Commander give command to **RETIRE COLORS. FLAG BEARERS IN UNISON ABOUT FACE to THEIR RIGHT, GO TO THE FLAGS, RETREIVE them, and PIVOT Back INWARD and Proceed Back Into Column – ALL DONE IN UNISON WITHOUT ANY FURTHER COMMANDS.**



Note: Arrow designates direction guard is facing

4



8. Stay at Attention in case of National Anthem and or Any Other Final Closings. Then Commander will give order to '**LEFT FACE**' .
9. **Commander Gives order to FORWARD MARCH.** GUARDS will proceed to pre-designated area and then wait at attention.
10. Commander will order **RETURN SWORDS**, then **HAND SALUTE**, then **DIS-MISSED**

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